1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
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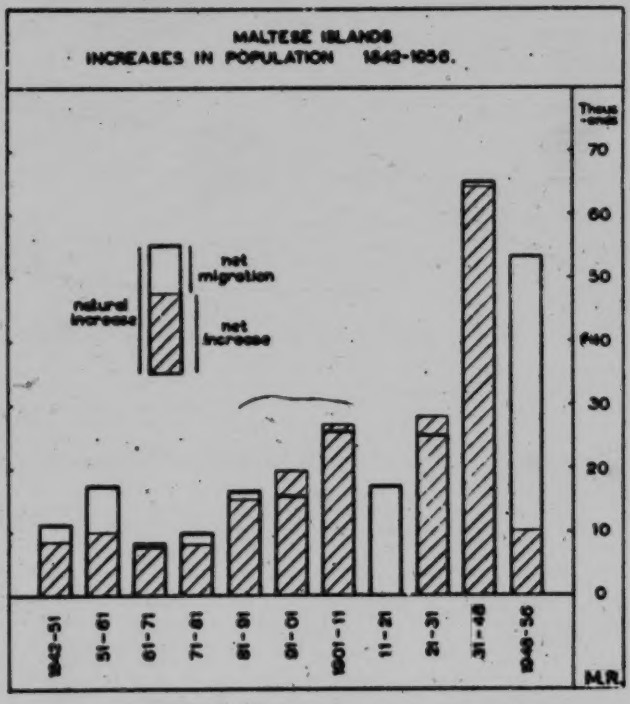

Fig. 37 Maltese Islands: Increases in Population, 1842-1956.

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much of the rest of Europe had static or declining numbers until the eighteenth century (Fig. 35). The relative security and stability of Maltese life during this period is thus reflected in the population figures. Excessive pressure of numbers on resources was becoming apparent before the British era and emigration was suggested as early as the eighteenth century (19). That this particular problem has become intensified during the period of British sovereignty is a result of further acceleration in the rate of population increase which, as we shall see, has been a product of improvements in social and economic welfare.

Table 28. Increase of population 1830-1956

Average annual increase %

Period	Maltese Islands	Malta	Gozo
1830-1842	0.63	0.74	0.33
1842-1956	0.90	0.96	0.58

1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
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nuclei. Table 27 below shows how in numerical terms the regional population balance changed. It will be observed that the proportion of people living in the diminishing rural area remained remarkably constant, although as already noted in Chapter V, a growing number of these were not farmworkers. Equally noteworthy is the decline in residential importance of the urban nucleus compared with the rise of the suburbs, producing a complete proportional reversal between 1842 and 1956 (Fig. 41).

Table 27. Percentage distribution of population, Island of Malta.

	1842	1861	1881	1901	1921	1948	1956
Urban Districts	50.6	48.0	43.3	33.2	28.2	12.6	14.5
Suburban Districts	14.5	17.4	23.1	33.1	39.2	52.6	50.9
Rural Districts	34.9	34.6	33.6	33.7	32.6	34.8	34.6

Within this main pattern of distributional change, other small-scale but significant trends may be discerned. Among the urban areas (Fig. 42), Valletta's population was decreasing as early as 1842-51, but in other districts the decline did not set in until after 1871, while Senglea and Kospikwa continued to grow, albeit slowly, until 1911. During the Second World War, decline in numbers was most marked in the Three Cities while the population of Floriana actually increased. Since 1948, there has been a reversal of these trends, the populations of Senglea and Kospikwa growing more rapidly than that of Floriana, while Valletta and Vittoriosa showed little or no increase.

The most noteworthy distinction among suburban localities has been the differences between the older and newer centres (Fig. 43). Birkirkara, Qormi, Żabbar and Tarxien have all shown a slower rate of growth than the other nine localities, although in the case of Tarxien, now contiguous with the newer settlement of Pawla, increase has been quite rapid. The growth of Pawla, Hamrun, Sliema and St. Julian's has been the most striking feature of the period since the first Census. In 1842, these hamlets had less than 1,000 inhabitants while in 1956, they were the home of some 70,000 people, half the suburban population and one-quarter of that of the whole of Malta. The stagnation of Kalkara further illustrates the fact that second-stage suburban growth has been concentrated around and beyond Marsamxett Harbour rather than near the commercial and naval Grand Harbour.

Among rural areas too (Fig. 44) growth has been most rapid in the newer and largely non-agricultural settlements such as Marsaxlokk, Birżebbuga and St. Paul's Bay. A few villages, including Żurrieq, Kirkop and Mosta, showed rapid gains between 1901 and 1911 but lost a great deal of ground in the following decade when their rate of growth was much smaller than that of the newer settlements mentioned above.

In Gozo (Fig. 45), the largest villages have grown least in recent years while smaller ones, such as Żebbuġ, have gained more rapidly. However, unlike Malta, Gozo shows no great gains among the newer centres. San Lawrenz, for example, was created a parish in 1901 but suffered a steady decline in population from that date until 1948.

SEX AND AGE STRUCTURE OF THE POPULATION

From 1842 onward an excess of females over males has been characteristic of the population of the Islands (Fig. 46). Masculinity, as measured by the male: female ratio, has been consistently higher in Malta than in Gozo. All the evidence suggests that this is a result of the persistent character of male emigration from the smaller island, whether to Malta or further afield. Within Malta some characteristic trends are observable. The masculinity of the urban districts has closely followed, though at a lower level, that of Malta as a whole.

1:Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
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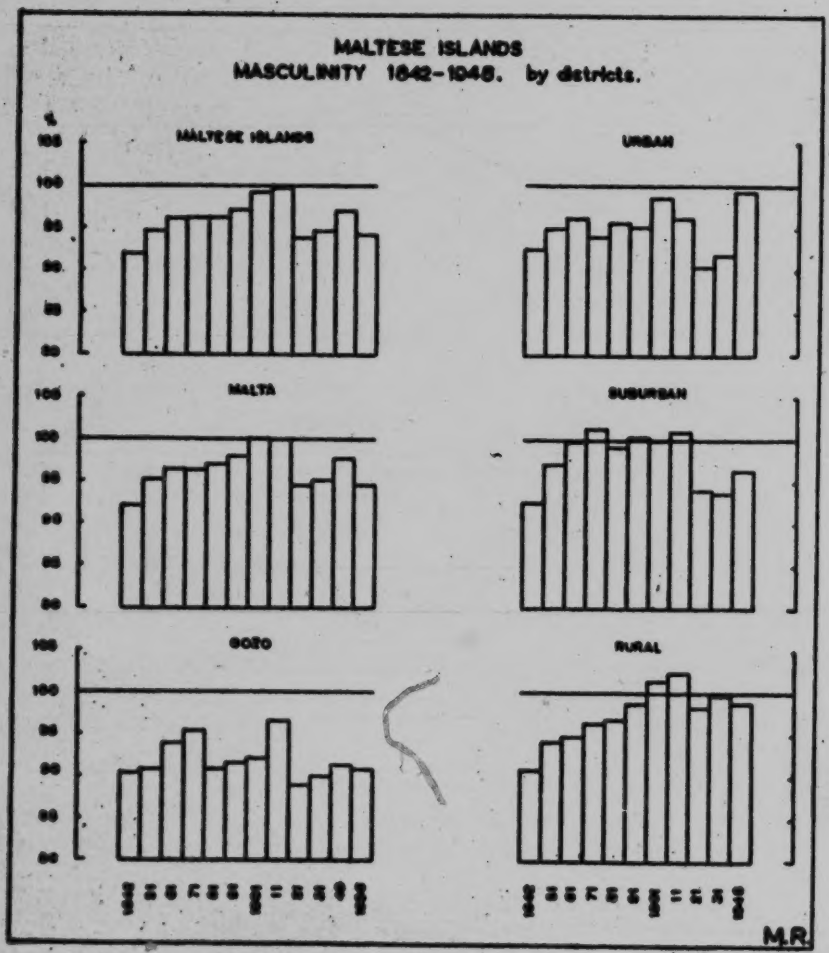

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Fig. 46 Maltese Islands: Masculinity, 1842-1948, by Districts.

[p. 145-A]

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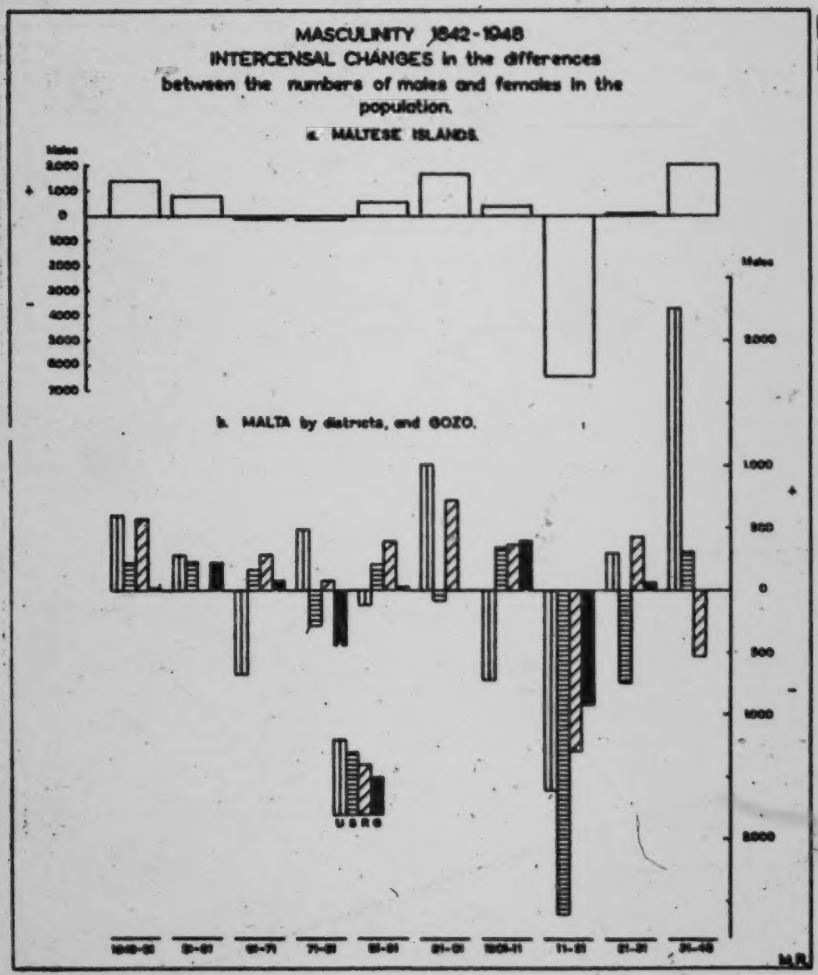

Fig. 47 Masculinity, 1842-1948.

[p. 145-B]

1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
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Departures from the Island trend were most marked by a low masculinity in 1921 and an abnormally high ratio in 1948. In suburban areas growth of the population as a whole, which was most rapid between 1861 and 1911, was not accompanied by any marked imbalance between the sexes but after the latter date low masculinity was persistent and the ratio fluctuated much less than in urban districts. In rural districts, masculinity increased steadily from 1842 to 1911, when 102.5, the highest ratio ever recorded in Malta, was achieved in these areas. After 1911, there was some decline, but rural areas continued to show a higher ratio of males to females than did the Island as a whole.

The sex structure of a population is closely connected with, among other factors, external and internal migration rates. We may therefore use masculinity ratios to help our general understanding of other socio-economic conditions and also vice-versa. The early appearance and continuance of an excess of females in the case of Malta is without doubt the result of predominantly male emigraton, a causative relationship particularly strong in slowly developing Gozo. By 1911, the cumulative effect of the return of male immigrants together with other factors brought the ratio to near-parity. After 1911, increasing emigration reduced masculinity to the low point of 1921 from which it again rose to 1948, since which time renewed and large-scale outward movement has once more reduced the ratio. Except for the special circumstances obtaining in the late 1930's when most of the female non-Maltese population (largely Garrison families) was evacuated, and in the mid-40s when a more balanced non-Maltese group became re-established; except for this, the sex ratio can clearly be understood in association with our examination of economic changes and with a study of emigration (p. 157 et. seq.).

Regional differences in masculinity are of similar value in elucidating changing patterns of economic development and of internal migration. The rising proportion of males in the urban population between 1891 and 1901, for example, was to a large extent a product of an inward movement of workers connected with harbour development, and the decline in masculinity which marked the succeeding decade reflects the cessation of such work. The increased urban masculinity recorded in 1948 suggests that the return to reconstructed areas was evenly balanced thus causing an adjustment in the ratio, moving away from the female preponderance of 1931 (Fig. 47).

Fluctuations in suburban sex ratios have been relatively slight. The fall in masculinity between 1911 and 1921 was largely a product of emigration, while that of 1921-31 is statistical rather than real in that, at the latter census, the 'civil population' included the families of the garrison among whom females predominated and who lived mainly in Suburban Districts.

In Rural Districts, increases in the proportion of males down to 1911, reflect an inward movement, largely of emigrants returning from North Africa together with the late arresting of the earlier male movement to the towns. Declining masculinity between 1931 and 1948 was largely a product of renewed movement to the towns, often a first stage in migration overseas.

The age composition of the Islands' population is especially characterised by the high proportion of children, as shown in Table 38.

Table 38. Age-distribution of populations in percentages.

	Under 15	15-64	65 and over
United Kingdom (1948)	21.4	67.9	10.7
Italy (1949)	26.5	65.6	7.9
Netherlands (1950)	29.4	62.9	7.7
Malta (1948)	34.8	59.3	5.9
Japan (1950)	35.4	59.7	4.9

16 This table summarises the data illustrated graphically in Figs. 52 and 53, and shows that 70 per cent. of Maltese women eventually have four or more children and 25.9 per cent. have at least ten.

The survival rate is discussed later (p. 153) but the 1948 Census does show the proportion of children born who were still living at the time of the Census and adds a further perspective to the statement of actual family size. Deaths reduce the mean number of children per married woman from 4.8 to 3.2. Effective family size has in the past been reduced mainly by the extraordinarily high rate of infant mortality. In recent years this has been checked and larger families can be expected unless adjustments operate in the birth, marriage or fertility rates in the immediate future. Past trends in these rates, which contribute to the natural increase are considered in the following section.

ELEMENTS OF POPULATION GROWTH

161 Since changes in population are a function of births, deaths and migration, the trends of each of these and their relative contributions to growth must be considered. In the 114 years between 1842 and 1956, there was a net increase of just over 200,000. In the same period, nearly 70,000 people have been lost by migration and the natural increase has amounted to some 267,000.

[167]

[p. 151-B]

[i.e., Table 29, p. 149 -- Analyst]

1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
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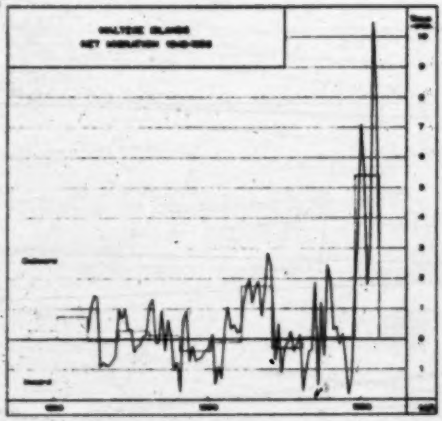

Fig. 59 Maltese Islands: Net Migration, 1842-1956.

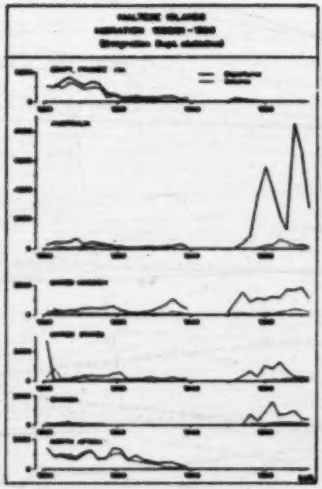

Fig. 60 Maltese Islands: Migration, 1930/31 - 1956.

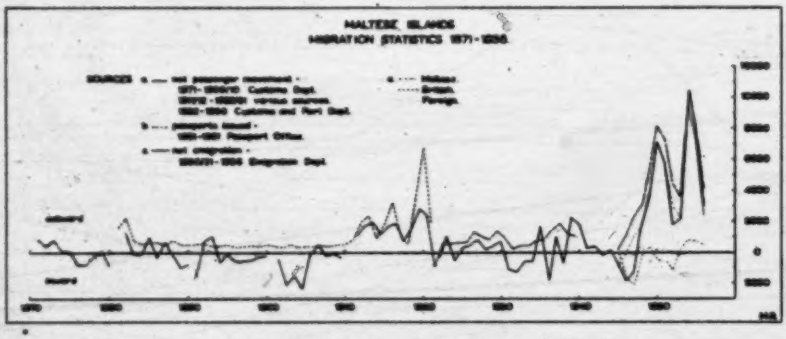

Fig. 58 Maltese Islands: Migration Statistics, 1871-1956.

1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
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has the nuptial fertility rate fallen below 300 and it is now 25 per cent. higher than that of Ireland, reputedly the highest in the world (22).

Fertility, marriage and birth-rates have been outlined above, but the trends of the first two do not account for decline of the last. Fertility is stable, or was until 1948, the marriage rate has not declined since that year and previous trends of nuptial fertility do not suggest any imminent decline. One strong possibility, however, is that the pattern of post-war migration is concealing a decline in the married population. Many migrants from the Islands return to get married and leave with their brides for their new homes. Their children are born overseas so that marriages which have been registered in the Islands give rise to children born and registered abroad. If this is so, it indicates that a decline in the rate of emigration would result in a rapid revival of the birth rate and that the present pattern of natural increase is very much affected by the trends of emigration.

MIGRATION

The pattern of nineteenth century migration has been the subject of close study by Price (23) who deals mainly with the period 1842-81 using as his major source of information, the records of the Passport Office. Since the Department of Emigration was not established until after the First World War, the intervening period has been filled in for this study by interpretation of further Passport records and of passenger movement statistics collected by the Customs and Port Department. From 1918 onwards statistics of the Emigration Department have been used along with those of the Customs and Port Department.

Comparability of material has been one of the biggest problems. In the period covered by Price, the native Maltese population only was considered; subsequent statistics are for the entire civil population, which from 1901 onwards included the families of the Garrison. The best check on the scale of movement is provided by a consideration of the Census reports together with vital statistics for inter-censal years. The difference between the net increase in population and the natural increase represents the inter-censal net migration.

Table 30. Inter-censal migration 1842-1956.

Period	Natural Increase	Net Increase	Net Migration
1842-51	11,310[1]	8,620	- 2,690
1851-61	17,470[2]	10,060	- 7,410
1861-71	7,860[3]	8,490	+ 630
1871-81	11,030[4]	8,180	- 2,850
1881-91	16,490	15,260	- 1,230
1891-1901	15,830	19,710	+ 3,880
1901-11	26,030	27,080	+ 1,050
1911-21	17,300	-110	-17,410
1921-31	25,280	28,260	+ 2,980
1931-48	65,140	64,370	- 770
1948-56[5]	53,480	10,250	-43,230

1-4. Price, op. cit.
5. Estimate from the Census of 1948 to 31st December, 1956.
1842-81. Maltese population only.
1881-1901. Civilian population excluding Garrison families.
1901-1956. Civilian population including Garrison families.

A graph covering the last hundred years (Fig. 58) shows inter-censal net migrations and annual variations in the scale of movement as indicated by passports issued and by the Customs and Port Department records. The latter are adjusted for each decade to make the sum of annual totals comparable with the inter-censal net totals shown in Table 30 (see also Fig. 59).

In the nineteenth century, the principal factors affecting the scale of migration were economic. Periods of poverty at home sometimes drove the Maltese overseas while at other times they were attracted by boom conditions elsewhere in the Mediterranean. During the Crimean War, not even prosperity at home could counteract the cotton and building boom in Egypt and emigration rose to record heights (24). But the end of the Egyptian boom coincided with depression in Barbary and the two resulted in returns to Malta which more than compensated for the outward movement of the 50's and 60's. In the 1870's, recovery in Barbary coincided with slight recession in Malta and the number of emigrants again increased only to diminish again in 1875-80, reflecting bankrupt conditions in Egypt (25). The economic position of the receiving countries therefore played an important part in determining the volume of emigration at any given moment.

An outstanding feature of nineteenth century movement was a series of attempts to organise emigration from the Maltese Islands. The first of these ended with the failure of the Guiana and Granada experiments of 1831-41 when plantation settlement in these areas was attempted (26). Subsequent plans to settle colonies in Cyprus, Australia and the Americas collapsed and various other attempts to establish Maltese communities overseas each failed in turn. As a result, over 90 per cent. of nineteenth century emigrants moved no further than the coasts of North Africa and the Levant.

The restricted scope of movement and the choice of the Mediterranean seaboard for settlement was influenced by three main non-economic factors: 'the belief that America and Australia were the permanent homes of strange and deadly diseases; the belief that it was necessary to settle in a country near enough to Malta to allow easy and frequent return to the beloved homeland; and the belief that similarity of language and custom marked out North Africa as the divinely appointed region for Maltese settlement abroad' (27).

The annexation of Tunis by the French in 1881 was an indication that the Maltese would no longer find North Africa an open field and the competition in business and commerce from the French and Italians became severe. Moreover, the standard of living in Malta from the 1860's onwards was higher than in most other parts of the Mediterranean so that there was little incentive for the Maltese to go there. Furthermore, the 80's saw the expansion of employment opportunities at home with the introduction of a number of schemes involving large scale public expenditure. As a result of such developments, the period from the late 1880's until 1905 was one in which there was a net inward movement. All thoughts of migration were abandoned and in 1905 the labour shortage was so acute that 300 workers were brought in from Sicily, Italy and Spain. 1906 saw the completion of major harbour and dockyard works and unemployment then became a serious problem which was partially responsible for the visit of the Royal Commission in 1911 (28). Since French and Italian control of North Africa was then complete, attention had to be paid to movement further afield.

In 1907, on the basis of experience already gained and during the period of depression, a voluntary organisation known as the Malta Emigration Committee was formed. In spite of the approval shown by the 1912 Royal Commissioners, this body was neither given any official status nor superseded by any official organisation. Partly as a result of the difficulties confronting the Committee, a Brazilian venture failed miserably in 1912, and in 1916 an unhappy combination of circumstances provoked such Australian antagonism to migration to that continent that an embargo on future movement was established which prevailed until 1920.

In 1918 the need for adjustment to post-war conditions became sufficiently great to force the establishment of an Emigration Department charged with the control of movement and the selection of personnel (Fig. 60). The social aspects

1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
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of the Selective System were of considerable importance. The main receiving countries were formulating restrictive laws and imposing quotas on entry. The physical, educational and social backgrounds of intending emigrants therefore needed considerable attention. Of the prospective emigrants in the early 1920's, 90 per cent. were illiterate and apart from apprenticeship schemes in the Dockyard there existed no opportunities for vocational or technical training. It can be assumed that only an infinitesimal number of migrants possessed any capital. Casolani, the Superintendent of Emigration between 1918 and 1930 claimed that the sudden realisation of the need for educating and training intending emigrants was most salutary in that it clearly showed how the existing educational system had - 'for a century been absolutely unrelated to the present needs of the people' (28). Since 1920, vocational training courses have been developed, a Migrants Training Centre opened in 1927, and more recently an Industrial Training Centre. In 1956 nearly 1,000 students were attending evening classes and many utilising other schemes. Ironically enough, by the 1950's the burden of expenditure incurred in the training of people who were to use their skills elsewhere, now began to prove in itself a major problem.

The direction of emigration since 1920 is illustrated in Figs. 60, 61, 62. Briefly, the major trends may be outlined as follows. Short-distance migration to Europe and North Africa declined rapidly and returns increased during the 1920's of economic dislocation and increasingly restrictionist policies in the receiving countries. The United States, Canada and Australia by various quota schemes reduced the inflow from Europe and that part of Maltese long-distance movement via the mainland as well as direct was struck a final blow by the 1930-31 world slump. The most rapid revival took place in movement to the United Kingdom where Maltese status as British subjects ensured preferential treatment. Economic conditions in all other areas other than Australia prevented any other revival before World War II destroyed all possibility of movement.

During the war, continued population growth and obvious hardships and insecurity pointed to emigration as a desirable action and led to official preparation for a post-war exodus. By the end of December 1946 nearly 12,000 prospective emigrants had been registered of whom over 10,000 wished to go to the U.S.A. and Australia (in roughly equal numbers). Until 1948 shipping shortages, administrative difficulties and the presence of a housing problem in Australia, together with a boom in domestic demand for labour in reconstruction work, slowed down the actual rate of movement. At the same time pressure kept building up and by March 1949 there were 42,120 registered prospective migrants.

In that same year financial assistance to would-be emigrants was made available on a significant scale. As from 1947 the Maltese Government contributed to a Passage Assistance Scheme whereby 75 per cent. of the cost of passage would be provided to 'suitable, necessitous and deserving cases with good prospects of employment abroad', a scheme more generous in its coverage than that available in 1946 from the Emergency Unemployment Loan Scheme. With effect from the beginning of 1949 the Passage Assistance Agreement concluded between Malta and Australia made available more capital than Malta alone could supply but, in that the equal grants made by both Governments were each limited to £30 per capita, a greater onus was placed on the migrant. Even so during 1949 nearly three and a half thousand people left for Australia under passage assistance schemes and in 1950 this rose to nearly 5,000, a proportion in each case of over 80 per cent. of all assisted emigrants. Between 1951 and 1953 economic difficulties in Australia reduced the strength of attraction to that country and a relatively greater proportion of movement was direct towards Canada.

By 1953, Australian economic revival and a firm acceptance of an emigration policy by the Maltese Government foreshadowed an impending increase in emigration and the United Kingdom Government agreed to alleviate the personal and Budgetary strains in Malta by making a contributory grant of up to £200,000 towards the Passage Assistance Scheme. By 1956, 60 per cent. of all expenditure on assistance was being borne by the United Kingdom Government, 10 per cent.

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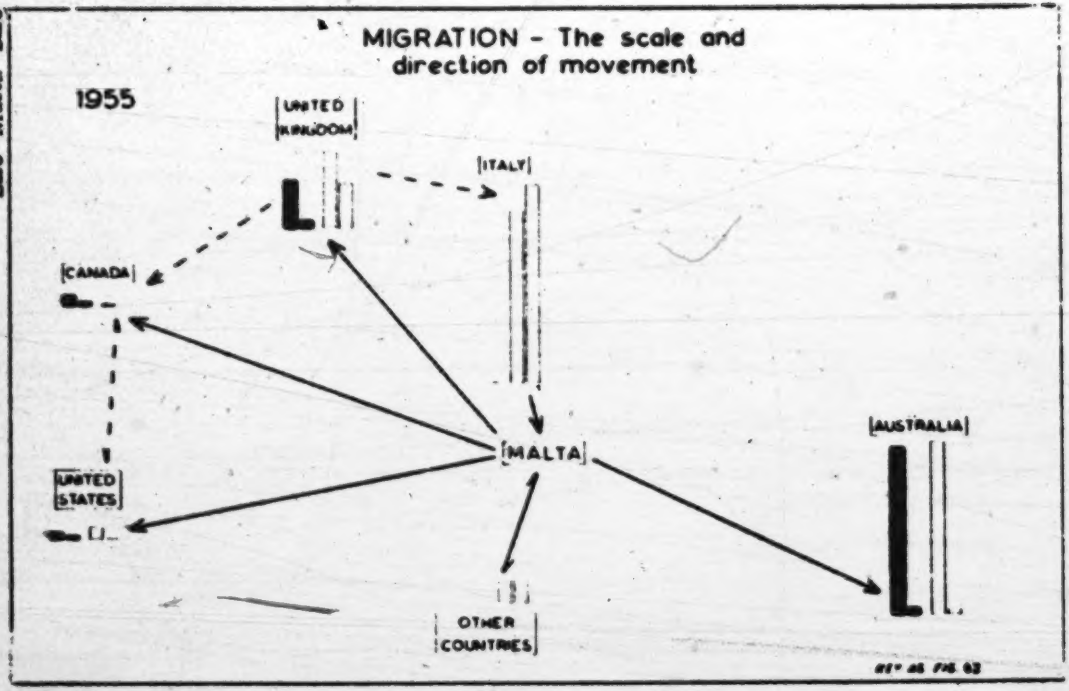

[p. 160-A]

Fig. 61 Migration: Scale and Direction of Movement, 1955

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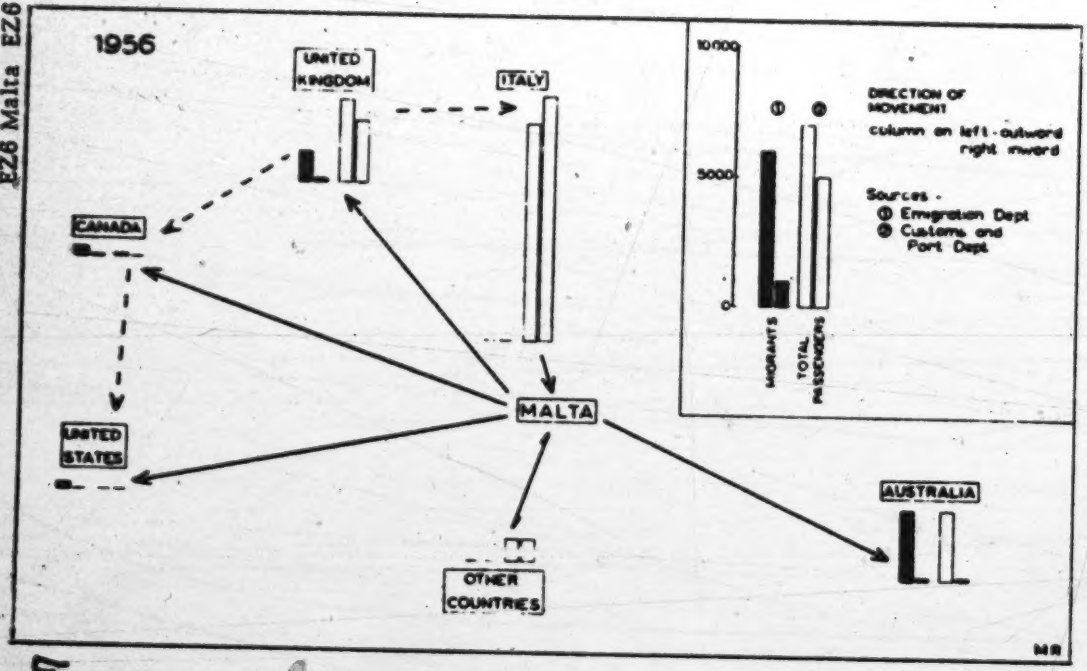

Fig. 62 Migration: Scale and Direction of Movement, 1956.

[p. 160-B]

1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
EZ6 Malta EZ6

[167] [658] [874] by Australia, and 30 per cent. by the Maltese Government. In addition, the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund has helped to finance vocational training schemes. Even so, as already noted, the burden and the irony of training and sending away that part of the population which potentially is the most productive has been keenly felt in Malta. In 1954, 11,000 emigrants left the Islands, 9,793 under Passage Assistance Schemes, over 8,000 of these for Australia. Since 1955, the policy of encouraging emigration has been implemented less vigorously and the rates of departure have become strongly influenced by political dictates. The social and demographic repercussions of fluctuations in policy need no especial emphasis here.

In conclusion, we may consider the regional variations in emigration. Traditionally, movement tended to be from the countryside into the towns and thence outward from Malta. Exceptional was Gozo in that from villages such as Nadur a direct exodus was already well established in the nineteenth century. The position in recent years is shown in Fig. 63. The three regions with the highest emigration rates each have distinctive characteristics. The North is a newly-settled agricultural region. From its still relatively youthful population with a high birth rate, a larger than average proportion is fitted by reason of age and absence of ties for emigration. The south-eastern district of Birżebbuġa

[p. 160-C]

1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
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and Kalafrana have also been centres of inward movement, and moreover have a higher than average proportion of skilled labour associated with Naval stations. The last region, that of suburban Malta stretching from Tarxien to St. Andrew's, is an area of transit to some extent, an area of urban and relatively mobile life, and as such is the type of region from which on *a priori* grounds one would expect high rates of exodus.

In some ways more noteworthy, and of particular direct interest in association with other of our findings, is the relative immobility in Central Malta, that belt of country stretching from Fomm ir-Rieh, across the Mdina-Rabat Uplands, across the long-settled good farmlands of the Central Region eastwards to St. Thomas' Bay. In this heart of old rural Malta, least directly affected by the changes characteristic of the last four centuries, the extreme course of emigration makes the least appeal.

POPULATION INCREASE IN RELATION TO RESOURCES

Between 1842 and 1905 the population of the Islands increased by 86,000 from 113,864. By 1947 it had grown by a further 100,000, an increase of 50 per cent. in 42 years. During the last decade the rate of increase has considerably diminished.

Behind this bare statement lie a number of important facts. We know that the rate of increase before the date of the first census was very high, extremely so when we remember the incidence of disease and corsair raids. As noted on p. 136 the rate of increase in the island of Malta during the rule of the Order was greater than that of Gozo during the last century. Moreover, it is probable that for some three or four centuries previous to the arrival of the Knights the rate of increase was comparable to those of the later periods.

It seems likely, therefore, that for perhaps 800 years, the Maltese population has increased at a fairly consistent and high rate up to 1947 (see too Section IV). It also seems probable that net emigration, although regionally variable, did little to relieve the steadily growing pressure on resource. We know, for instance, that of the total loss by migration of 67,000 between 1842 and 1956, 43,000 left after 1 9 9. We also know that crude mortality rates dropped but slowly before 1943 and that infantile death rates declined markedly only after this decade. There is therefore no obvious vital revolution, no sudden upsurge in numbers, no simple formula, to be invoked in the explanation of the growth in Malta's population.

From a consideration of the demographic history of the Islands, in terms of political, economic and cultural changes and against the background of the landscape palimpsest, one is forced to strange conclusions, viz, that the concepts of 'over-population' or 'optimum population' have no historically valid meaning in a Maltese context. As we have seen in earlier chapters, there has always been considerable Island contact with neighbouring lands. During the period for which we have any historical record a great part of the wealth on which Malta has lived has come from outside. The historical sequence of population growth appears in Micawberish terms: something has always turned up, either a new external valuation or a new possibility of marginally increasing resource wealth, in time to prevent real 'over-population' appearing. This hypothesis is considered more fully in the concluding section but it is worth noting here that each historical conquest has *ipso facto* been made by an increasingly world-conscious power, by a more enterprising society, and each has led to the creation of wider opportunities for the gaining of wealth. Similarly, each intervening period of doldrums has been marked by improved ability to intensify the exploitation of internal resource, generally in the agricultural sector. Thus, in the eighteenth century the cotton boom, in the mid-nineteenth century livestock improvement and land reclamation, in the twentieth century modernised irrigation and dairy-farming, and more recently horticulture and the search for oil.

Up to the present time fortune has smiled and there has been no fall in living standards as might be expected in consequence of extreme over-population. Yet, during historical times at least, the population has always been too great for self-sufficiency and in this sense has always been over-large. The rather

1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
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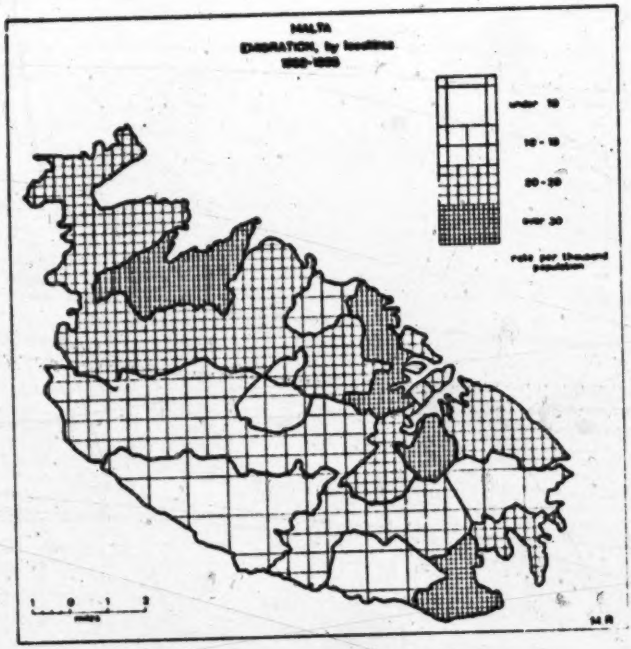

Fig. 63 Emigration by Localities, 1952-55.

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puzzled note made by the Royal Commissioners of 1911 would seem to be applicable to the whole of our period: 'We cannot but conclude that the Maltese people as a whole are by no means a destitute population seeing that they continue to absorb and pay for imports of considerable value over and above those which may be said to be paid for by the exportation of the products of the Islands' (30).

The obvious question of whether this process has now reached its limit is bound up with our analysis of the contemporary situation. For a decade or so, there has been a substantial overspill of population in emigration and the birth rate has declined (p. 153). The present apparent equilibrium is however most unstable. The rate of emigration itself is only to a limited extent controlled by economic forces and is bound to fluctuate. If the 1948-56 rate of natural increase were maintained and emigration discontinued, the total population of the Islands would leap up another 100,000 over the 1947 level to 400,000 by 1968. Moreover and as noted on p. 157 the nuptial fertility rates reveal that the rate of natural increase could rise even higher than at present if the indirect effects of emigration disappeared. To what circumstances can the concept of a population optimum be referred? Quite obviously the term has no relevance either to the known past or hypothetical future in that historical experience has so conditioned Maltese attitudes the even now there seems general confidence that a continued population inflation can be maintained.

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168 Demographically considered these are facts of observation; socially and economically they are the factual basis on which future policies must be based.

369 formed a facade behind which has hidden an old slow-changing and parochial Malta.

The towns are Italianate in character, the farm buildings archaically indigenous; the city dwellers speak a Maltese liberally sprinkled with European loanwords, the countryfolk's language is more strongly semitic. The urban place names are usually historical or religious in character - Valletta, Kingsway or [103] Strada Reale, Triq San Pietru; in the country one finds the older elements - Żebbuġ, place of the olive, Hamrija - red soil, Kalanka - hard stone. The Three Cities themselves have two sets of names - Kospikwa, Senglea, Vittoriosa for the Knights and their successors, Bormla, Isla and Birgu for the people. Architecture, language, place names, consumption patterns, even temperament still divide the two sections of the community. The farmers' forebears who helped to build Valletta on the barren Xibberas peninsula, and the citadels, the coastal towers, literally built a stone curtain which cut off their descendants from the outside world. These two societies, one cosmopolitan, one parochially Boeotian, have existed until recently in a fairly amicable symbiotic relationship. The country produced the labour and the iron rations of agricultural produce, the cities supplied the markets and provided the basis of defence.

178 Under British occupation however, and during the social and technical revo-
369 lutions of the nineteenth century, this balance started to break down. For the
464 first time, considerable opportunities of non-rural employment became available. The high tide of pressure on land resources started to ebb in the last decades of the nineteenth century, leaving a flood mark of land laid out but never taken [166] up in the western hills. Labour started leaving full time farming, villages such as Safi lost population to new centres like Kalafrana. There has been an actual and psychological diminishing of that pressure on land resource that brought the present landscape into being. In spite of a three-fold increase in 150 years, the population rising to over 300,000, the number of full-time farmers is now probably smaller than it was 50 years ago.

178 A third estate and a new imbalance have been created. Fifty-eight per cent.
182 of the gainfully employed population works for the Government and Service
[464] Departments, as compared with less than 10 per cent. in full-time agriculture. This section of the community, once it has severed its roots in the land, is also apt to sever its connection with Malta. Net emigration between 1945 and 1954 totalled over 45,000 and the population total now fluctuates rather than shows a [167] steady increase. It has been fortunate that the direct pressure on land has slackened since the demands directly and indirectly to support the garrisons have grown with inexorable inevitability. Forts, naval bases and airfields, storage depots and houses - many more houses, have devoured scanty land. This conflict of interests has always been present - long before the conflicting needs of flying boats and fishing fleets caused trouble in 1956. The breaking down of the old equilibrium is caused by a variety of forces and in turn further strengthens these forces. Environmental limitation of personal opportunity has become as irksome as the desire for national political independence and the necessity for economic dependence. Social policy urged on by growing needs is hamstrung by natural poverty. In town and country alike a painful groping towards a new equilibrium at a twentieth century level is manifest.

Lastly what of the response to these challenges? What are the reasons for the slowness of recent adjustment? Fear, lack of security, the very factors that made Malta important as an outpost and earned her a George Cross are also responsible for many of her difficulties. The distribution of settlements is one indicator of this fear. In the traditional area of invasion and attack, the broken lands of the West, there occurs only one town, Mellieha, and even this, hidden from the sea in a defensible position, has only grown rapidly in the last 80 years. Another indicator is the strength of the Church and the general devotion it commands. Vast wealth and effort has gone into the building and adorning of the individual churches - symbols of one type of guardianship.

178 Fear - inherent or acquired - has hindered development in many ways.
182 Industry and commerce have never fully flowered because local capital has always
454 flown to areas of less risk. How can it be blamed? Even 25 years ago, who would

2: Boissevain E-5 (1960-1961) 1965
EZ6 Malta EZ6

of new associations in the village and the increased activity of political parties.

During the mid-'fifties emigration drained away many of the most active supporters of the partiti. In 1954 alone, no fewer than two dozen men between 18 and 38 left the village for Australia and Canada. Each club lost key bandsmen, and the two bands, already heavily bolstered with outside players, never recovered. A constantly improving bus service enabled young men to go to the 'talkies' in other villages, or just stroll up and down Kingsway in Valletta – a very popular pastime with young people from all over Malta – instead of spending the evening in their village clubs. During this period the Football Club, MUSEUM and Catholic Action were established in the village and began to draw potential partit leaders into other spheres of activity. The Football Club was particularly damaging in this respect. As a neutral social club it provided a place where the young men of the two partiti, who normally never entered one another's clubs, could meet. A number of friendships developed between them, and it soon became the most popular club in the village. Finally, the increased activity of the national political parties during the elections in 1950, 1951, 1953 and 1955 drew the attention of the villagers away from purely parochial concerns and bound them up in rivalries of a different order, which often cut across traditional allegiances. This created factions within the clubs and weakened the partiti.

Rivalry flared up again in 1960, when the supporters of St. Martin, intent upon celebrating the centenary of their patron, staged the greatest festa in the history of the village. But the political and religious fervour of the 1961 election campaign soon captured the attention of the partisans, and the festa of the following year was a pale shadow of the gala spectacle of the year before.

Before proceeding any further, we must unravel the rather complicated tangle of partit, club and confraternity. All festa partiti are composed of three groups: (i) the band club, which provides the leadership of the partit and includes most of the active male supporters, many of whom are also members of (ii) the confraternity allied with the partit or dedicated to its patron, and (iii) the rank and file of men, women and children who are members neither of the confraternity nor of the club, but still support the partit against its rival. The central strand running through all

3: Buxton D-5 (1920-1921) 1922 EZ6 Malta EZ6

175 The building of Valletta was begun by La Vallette and continued by subsequent
169 Grand Masters. The majority of the labourers employed appear to have been
361 slaves, although a certain number of men are said to have been imported from Sicily and Calabria. It is difficult to estimate how far an industrial population, which must have amounted to over 8000 men, can have affected the ethnology of the island.

175 It will be seen, then, that the population of the urban districts, including as it
161 does such a very large proportion of the total inhabitants of the island, is compara-
361 tively new to its present surroundings. We have not got in Valletta, as we have in some parts of the Mediterranean, a town site which has been occupied more or less continuously since the dawn of history. We do not know, of course, what was the condition of Mount Sceberras before Valletta was built, but it certainly was not in any way an urban area, the old town having been what is now known as Citta Vecchia.

175 The subsequent history of the Order is not of great importance from the
648 ethnological point of view. The Knights did not succeed in suppressing the Barbary corsairs, but carried on a number of sea-faring expeditions, especially in the Levant, although during the seventeenth century there were numerous sea battles between the Knights and the corsairs.

175 During the occupation of the Order, the food supply of Malta was imported
433 from Sicily, and when diplomatic relations were strained between the Order and the
464 King of Spain, shortage of food often became very marked. The relations between the Maltese and the Knights are difficult to sum up briefly. During the earlier days the privileges of the natives were only limited as far as military necessity, and, to a certain extent, financial obligations demanded. In later days the Maltese were employed as labourers, as soldiers, and as sailors, and although we find that in many cases the Grand Masters behaved generously to native women and children, the general record of the Knights, especially in the years before the final crash came, were unworthy of the ideals of an ascetic Order.

175 The Order ruled the island until the final break-up of the last relics of Mediæval
648 Europe by Napoleon. The French garrison surrendered to the British in 1800, after holding the island for two years. Malta was formally ceded to the British crown in 1814.

IV.—Demography.

161 It has been suggested that the large number of bones found in the Hypogæum
174 is evidence of a large population in Neolithic times. The place is, however, probably an ossuary, and may have been in use over a long period. The earlier records are for the most part unreliable. In 870, 3000 Greeks are said to have been killed, and 3614 women and 5000 children sold into captivity. This suggests a large population. In 1530 Boisgelin's figure (23) is 15,000, but Miège (27) suggests a population of 29,659. After the attack of the Turks in 1566, the total is said to have dropped to 10,000. The emissary of Pope Gregory XIII reported the

3: Buxton D-5 (1920-1921) 1922 EZ6 Malta EZ6

man, are also unusually fertile, and the females possess remarkably developed udders. Possibly similar causes make both man and the goats fertile. If this is so, emigrants from the island will probably, after a short time, lose their fertility,[1] whilst the only limiting factors on the island itself will be space and the food and water supply.

Summarizing our general conclusions, the race in Malta which is associated with the period of great megalithic buildings—a cultural stage we have termed "Malta Local Neolithic"—appears to be closely akin to the Mediterranean race. This is our "Malta first race." At a later date, possibly towards the end of the Bronze Age, but more probably during the Early Iron Age, Malta was peopled by a race with different characteristics, our "Malta second race." These people are of Armenoid type, but probably have an admixture of Mediterranean blood. Their origin appears to be the Eastern Mediterranean. They may have come to Malta either directly or by way of Carthage. They may have destroyed the previous inhabitants, or they may merely have pursued methods of peaceful penetration. This race has firmly established itself in Malta, and all subsequent introduction of foreign blood has failed to raise the variation. During the course of years certain changes have taken place; there are also certain local variations, but the differences between Malta and Gozo are not greater than the differences between the general population of Malta and at least one, and possibly more, of the more isolated villages.

APPENDIX I.

LITERATURE.

In writing this paper the following authorities have been consulted. Where specific reference is made, the number is given in brackets in the text.

II.—Geography.

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7. Agius, T. "The Monthly Characteristics of the Weather of Malta." In *General Guide of Malta and Gozo,* 1918.

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[1] Of interest in this connection is the fact that there is at present a Maltese colony in Detroit, U.S.A., and it will be instructive to observe whether, amid alien surroundings, the strain is able to perpetuate itself and to retain its fertility.

leisure time in place of unpaid field work with his parents.

Pawlu admits nevertheless that much of the inferior condition of the farmer derives from his inability to unite with other farmers (Section 4). Illiteracy, ignorance and suspicion are the major causes of his fear. Only a few farmers are members of either of the two opposing Unions of Farmers while the situation regarding co-operatives is equally unpromising. Pawlu himself became one of the organizers of a special 'Tractor Co-Operative', initiated by C.A.R.E. at the end of 1958 (Section 2) for a group of farmers in his home village. The members paid £2 each on joining the co-operative and were thereafter able to hire one of the two tractors donated by C.A.R.E. at only 10/- per hour instead of the commercial 17s. The fact that Pawlu himself was among the organizers of such a novel venture reflects his progressive outlook, and his standing in the village.

*159 156 829 Politics interest Pawlu, to a more than average degree His concern is based on an informed intelligence. A supporter of the Labour Party, he considers the Nationalists as holding the masses in contempt and he points to their emphasis on the Italian language and the non-Maltese culture which it represented as evidence. He reads the local Maltese-language press but is sufficiently independent of mind to have cancelled his subscription to the 'Lehen is-Sewwa' (B/65) at the time of the 'Integration' referendum on the grounds that neither the Church nor the Paper would publish an 'official' statement on the attitude of the Church. Yet his religious devotion is without question and he has a respected place in Church and village life.

*159 156 829 593 [555] [167] The Family. Pawlu lives with his wife and six of his children. His eldest son and daughter are both working as teachers in Malta. Another daughter has emigrated.

Pawlu's wife speaks only Maltese and had as little formal education as her husband, but she has at all times nothing but encouragement for her family in their education In this case there is not the usual gulf in outlook between parents and children on account of the education of the latter - for the parents fully realise the need. Pawlu's [462] wife used to work in the fields when young but now spends her time in the house. Certain jobs remain her special concern however, notably cheese-making, care of lambs and chicks and egg-collection.

*159 156 178 593 [875] The eldest son, now working as a teacher, is one of the young 'intellectuals' who are currently making an appearance in Gozo. The ties of family and respect between him and his father are strong but he is out of touch with the

*159 157 829 rejection of his village background, and his attitude to agricultural and other authorities in the Islands all mark him out as apart from the 'traditional' kind of farmer. At the same time, however, his case reflects the frustration and impatience of his own generation in the agricultural community.

*159 423 167 179 241 [441] He comes of a village family in which his father and paternal grand-father were both butchers. His father acquired a small farm of some two acres to provide vegetables for the family but neither Ġanni nor his brother, a few years his junior, was keen to expand the family holding. The family butchering business held no more attraction for them and was relinquished by the father when he retired from full-time work some years ago to run a small bar in the village. Both the brothers thought that neither butchering nor farming presented scope for money making so they emigrated to Australia. Ġanni's seven years there left him unsympathetic towards farming as practised in Malta, with its fragmentation, hand-labour and other limitations. He saw mechanization on the Australian pattern, with tractor-drawn, three-furrow plows, combine-harvesters and a variety of other large implements, as the only way to make Maltese farming a profitable venture.

*159 177 241 409 He returned home full of ideas of making money as a contractor-plowman. His native knowledge of Maltese farmers and farming left him with no illusions as to possibilities. Ġanni's subsequent efforts to find takers for his deep-plowing have entailed a hard fight against prejudice and criticism. Clearly many of the objections raised as to his methods and machines being unsuitable for Maltese conditions have not been without foundation but he has pushed ahead, working over a larger area, buying new types of machinery, etc.

The present discussion is concerned less with the technical details of this kind of heavy mechanization in Malta than with the attitudes which it reveals - especially the tremendous gulf in outlook between the older farmers and the few young men like Ġanni who are still making some effort in Maltese farming. It is held that these latter are more important than their present numbers would suggest since, without their sustained effort, an economic and social continuity will be lost. They are individuals upon whom some new or improved farming could be built in Malta and Gozo.

*159 241 829 Ġanni's view of farming in Malta.

"Farming in Malta is today generally uneconomical because of the high costs of the necessary hand-labour and because of the difficulties facing the mechanization of field-work" (Ġanni). He attributes what he regards as the present dismal prospect of Maltese agriculture to the lack of a guaranteed exportable crop, on the one hand, and to the lack of direction to the farmer from the agricultural authorities, on the other. Nevertheless he believes that neither

9: Luke G-5 (ca. 1920-ca. 1960) 1960
EZ6 Malta EZ6

desperately to drive out the Knights of S. John as over forty years previously he had driven them out of Rhodes. But he was now concerned with a wider issue than that of blunting once more that spearhead of the Church militant: he had grasped the point that Malta as his advanced naval base would make him the master of the entire Mediterranean. Even more fully, and for a short time successfully, was the point grasped by Bonaparte, who saw in Malta not only the naval base indispensable to the command of the Mediterranean but a vital link in the route to a farther East than Phœnician or Roman had known. Thereafter neither William II nor the Axis dictators had anything fresh to learn on the subject. Malta's strategic rôle had become a postulate.

3

At the beginning of 1959 the Maltese archipelago had an estimated population, formidable for its size, of 323,629 souls (exclusive of the personnel of the armed Services), to which Gozo contributed 27,846 and little Comino 30. That is to say that it contains close on 2700 people to the square mile, which makes it one of the most densely populated geographical units in the world. The figure would have been higher but for considerable post-war emigration to Australia and elsewhere. But if, even so, it is high when measured by the area of 121 square miles[1] on which it has to live, it is small for a separate nation. For the Maltese are a nation unto themselves, with their own language, their own traditions, their own physical characteristics and a history that is one of the longest to which any existing people can lay claim.

For some reason hitherto unexplained it was in Malta and Gozo that the art of building in remote Stone Age days reached a development of skill and refinement unknown in other centres of the megalithic and neolithic worlds. Malta was already, therefore, an ancient centre of civilization when

[1] *I.e.*, about five-sixths of the area of the Isle of Wight.

9: Luke G-5 (ca. 1920-ca. 1960) 1960
EZ6 Malta EZ6

we may safely assume that S. Paul's Aramaic was as comprehensible to them as was their related Phœnician to him.

There seems to be no evidence that this Semitic speech of the Maltese "barbarians" had been replaced by some other language when the Arabs seized the Maltese islands in 870. Many of the philologists therefore hold that on to this Punic stock the Arabs grafted, during the two hundred and twenty years of their occupation, a vocabulary of contemporary Arabic which did not completely oust words of the older, kindred stratum. These scholars consider that the dialect received, in fact, a second, fresher infusion from the same reservoir and that the resulting blend is the core of the Maltese language of to-day.

Inevitably, in the course of ages, this language has borrowed words from the languages and dialects of the other countries with which Malta has been connected—from Sicilian, from Aragonese, from Italian, from French, even from English—but it has always fitted such words into its own Semitic framework, has governed them according to the rules of its own Semitic grammar and mechanics. Thus the Maltese who have emigrated to Syria and to the north coast of Africa have no difficulty in making themselves understood by their Arabic-speaking neighbours, who for their part can make themselves readily understood in Malta. Here is the Lord's Prayer in Maltese, which I quote so that the reader unfamiliar with the language may see for himself what it looks like:

Missierna li inti fis-smewwiet,
Jitqaddes ismek,
Tigi saltnatek,
Ikun li trid Int, kif fis-sema hekda fl-art.

Hobzna ta' kull jum aghtina l-lum,
Ahfrilna dnubietna, bhalma nahfru lil min hu hati ghalina.
U la ddahhalniex fit-tigrib,
Izda ehlisna mid-deni. Hekk ikun.

9: Luke G-5 (ca. 1920-ca. 1960) 1960
EZ6 Malta EZ6
Gozo

sometimes regarded in England—in other words, as hard-headed folk whom nothing will keep out of the best jobs. It is certainly true to say that, loth as they may be to leave their own little island, when they do it is definitely to better themselves. They make excellent colonists in Australia and elsewhere in the New World, while those who emigrate no farther than Malta frequently attain distinction. The story is told of a function in S. John's Co-Cathedral in Valetta at a time, not so many years ago, when the Gozitans who were leading personages in Church and State included the Archbishop of Malta, Mgr Pace.

"Well," said a Maltese worshipper, after watching the entry into the church of the procession of Archbishop and Canons and other dignitaries, mostly (or so it seemed to him) natives of the junior island, "I suppose we ought to be thankful that the sacristan is still a Maltese."

Byron may have had something similar in mind when he bracketed Malta with Gozo as

> Calypso's isles,
> The sister tenants of the middle deep,

instead of describing them as mother and daughter.

There is much to see in this small island of 27 square miles and as many thousand inhabitants besides natural scenery and the monuments alluded to above. Let me instance some characteristic features of various widely different epochs of Gozo's long history. First must come the twin Stone Age temples of Ggantija, through their cyclopean construction—one block has the formidable dimensions of 12½ by 17½ feet—the most stupendous work of Neolithic man in the Maltese archipelago. Farther excavation by the Malta Museum is planned on and around their site when funds permit, and more wonders may yet come to light. Meanwhile the visitor may enjoy from one of the most impressive architectural survivals of remote antiquity a comprehensive view of Gozo and of the north-western end of Malta, with